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MADRAS WAR REVIEW

A WEEKLY BULLETIN OF THE WORLD WAR

VOL. IV FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 1943 No. 38

Companionship of Nations Based on Equality

The dissolution of the Communist International is proper and timely because it facilitates the organization of the common onslaught of all freedom-loving nations against the common enemy Hitlerism

It exposes the lie of Hitlerites to the effect that 'Moscow' allegedly intends to intervene in the life of other nations and to 'Bolshevise' them An end is now being put to this lie

It exposes the calumny of the adversaries of Communism within the Labour Movement to the effect that Communist parties in various countries are allegedly acting not in the interests of their people but on orders from outside. An end is now being put to this calumny too

M. STALIN

It facilitates the work of patriots in freedom-loving countries for uniting progressive forces of their respective countries regardless of party or religious faith into a single camp of national liberation, for the unfolding struggle against Fascism

It facilitates the work of patriots of all countries for uniting all freedom-loving peoples into a single international camp for the fight against the menace of the world-domination by Hitlerism, thus clearing the way to future organization of a companionship of nations based upon their equality

I think that all these circumstances taken together will result in further strengthening of the united front of the Allies and other nations in their fight for victory over Hitlerite tyranny. I feel that the dissolution of the Communist International is perfectly timely because it is exactly now when the Fascist beast is exerting its last strength that it is necessary to organise the common onslaught of freedom-loving countries to finish off this beast and to deliver the peoples from Fascist oppression

M. STALIN, *in a letter to Mr. Harold King on Saturday, May 29*

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"FAVOURABLE TENDENCIES"

"It looks as if the number of U-boats destroyed in May will exceed the number which the enemy have been able to bring into the war.

"In each of the first five months of this year, there has been a substantial reduction in merchant shipping losses compared to the corresponding period last year and a saving of over one third of the losses over the whole of these five months. During the last 12 months, the number of kills exceeds the whole of the previous period of the war and, in the last six months, the rate of destruction has been 25 per cent better than that of the previous six months."

"We must still be prepared to encounter setbacks and periods of heavy loss. The enemy is to bound to make greatefforts alter the present situation. Nevertheless the report I have just made discloses a number of favourable tendencies and I can give the unqualified assurance that the enemy are quite wrong in asserting as they have done that the low rate of sinkings in April is due to a small amount of shipping at sea. During that month our imports were the highest since the beginning of 1942."

—Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, *in the House of Commons on June 2.*

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Indian Troops! **Hope Club calling!!**

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Madras War Review

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Defiance to Dictators

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These will remain.—Though grisly worms of war
Furrow the face of earth and scar
Champaign and mountain-side, the field
Will generous wheat and barley yield,
And grasses wave, and clouds brocade
The skies and filigree the plain with shade.
Though you should irrigate with bloody rain
The acres thrusting up their thatch of grain,
These remain.

These will remain. Though guns spit fire and smoke
And fell a forest at a single stroke;
Though flesh be maggoty and mind diseased
And hearts by fear to dirty pellets squeezed;
Though Hell on roaring caterpillars ride—
Yet the brave banner of the countryside
With ancient honourable quarterings
Shall wave its colours while the linnet sings
And rainbows buttress falling heaven again.
Though you should soil the ground with bloody stain
These remain.

These will remain. Though you proclaim Doom,
Dictator, sweeping pell-mell to the tomb
Ten thousand villages, a thousand towns,
Their walls and wonders, riches and renowns;
Though raving like your robots' stuttering prattle
You prick indelible tattoos of battle—
O yet shall men be brave and women true
And children's laughter make a mock of you.
In the deep pit, in the black night
Shall be heart's beat and heart's delight.
Even in the odour of the slain
And memories of battles fought in vain
These remain.

R.G.

★

RUNNING COMMENTARY

Achievements of Indian Troops: Three years in Middle East. Three-and-a-half months ago, General Sir ALAN HARTLEY, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, speaking in the Council of State, paid a great tribute to the achievements of Indian troops in Africa. He said, "The record of the Fourth and Fifth Indian Divisions, the Third Indian Motor Brigade and others in the war in Africa as a whole has been outstanding and one for which India, the Empire and the United Nations have reasons to be grateful." Indian troops have subsequently given more reasons to earn the gratitude of the freedom-loving nations of the world. On April 8th, General ALEXANDER in a message to Field Marshal WAVELL testified to the "conspicuous dash and vigour" of the Fourth Indian Division in turning the Mareth positions. The victory of Wadi Akarit brought forth another great tribute from Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL. "We have watched with admiration," he said in a message to HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY "the splendid achievements of the Fourth Indian Division in the battle of Mareth and in the recent victory of Wadi Akarit. The high renown of India's soldiers and of the redoubtable Gurkha troops have been enhanced by the outstanding performance of the Indian army in all the campaigns of the Middle East. . . . We take pride that India's fighting men should now share in the success which has crowned the long uphill contest in which they have played so valiant a part."

Wherever Indian troops have been in the Middle East during the last three years, they have always covered themselves with glory and their performance has been worthy of India's great military traditions. Keren, Kissone, Messe, Sidi Barrani, Libyan Omar, Angila, Jalo, Bir Hakeim, Benghazi, Mareth, Wadi Akarit and Tunis—these place-names will always recall the heroic part played by Indian troops in North Africa.

* * * * *

"Spearhead of Attack": Germans Afraid of Indian Troops. The Fifth Indian Division played a notable part in the conquest of Italian Eritrea. It was in this campaign that the Duke of Aosta was captured by the Fourth Indian Division. It was this same division which captured General VON ARNIM and practically wound up the African campaign. Referring to this, the London *Evening Standard* says, "Neither accident nor cynical humour dictated that the military custodians of the creed of *Herrenvolk* should be humbled by non-Aryans whom they affect to despise most. The Fourth Indian Division deserved their captures. They grasped the prizes won in battle against the best soldiers the Nazis and Fascists could pit against them." The Nazis have realised that Indians are a formidable foe and a note to this effect by a German Intelligence Officer was found when the Nazis retreated from Benghazi. It said, "So long as the Seventh Armoured Division and the Fourth Indian Division are in the desert, we must watch out. They will be the spearhead of any attack." These two

divisions, the steel core of Britain's magnificent desert army, were responsible for the first defence of Egypt. Later, in the battle of Sidi Barrani, five Italian battalions were destroyed by them. Their heroic stand behind Bir Hakeim and their gunnery delayed ROMMEL's advance on El Alamein. They were among the vanguards of General MONTGOMERY's 2,000 of-mile drive across the desert. During the concluding stages in the North African war, both the divisions were switched on to the vital sector, and here again they won great battle honours. "Wherever the British fight," writes the *Evening Standard*, "the Indians are with them and of them. They are the pride of British armies everywhere and esteemed for their intelligence and mastery of the complicated machinery of war and faithfulness in dangers, in which man's mettle counts far more than creed or colour."

* * * * *

Distinguished Military Record: Part played in 1914-War. Indian troops have been Britain's pride not only in this war, but also in the last Great War. It may be recalled that, within a month of the declaration of war in 1914, a trained Indian corps sailed for France, where they helped in filling the breach in the Allied line with great gallantry. They distinguished themselves in Mesopotomia, Gallipoli and Palestine. Nearly a million and a quarter of men took part in widely-scattered theatres of war such as France, Belgium, Salonika, Egypt, the Sudan, Mesopotomia, Aden, East Africa, Nort-west Persia, South Persia and North China.

In this war they have fought in Norway, Flanders, Greece, Crete Malaya and Burma, and they have helped in clearing the enemy from the African soil. Thus one more brilliant chapter has been added to India's distinguished record of military achievement.

* * * * *

The Arakan Campaign: Five Stages—Causes of Failure. The Axis radio has been magnifying the Arakan campaign out of all proportion, particularly after the crushing defeat sustained by the Italo-German forces in Tunisia. Two weeks ago a Berlin commentator in English cited the capture of Maungdaw, "the last British stronghold in Burma" as an evidence of the alleged "growing strength of Japan in the East." It has been pointed out time and again that the Allied campaign in Arakan was primarily defensive. The fundamental objective of the Allies was to prevent the Japanese from using Akyab as an offensive base against India, and in this they have succeeded. But considered from the point of view of acquisition of territory, it is no doubt a failure, and the Allies have candidly acknowledged that the results have been disappointing. This frank acknowledgment of failure must be contrasted wi h the ludicrous Axis camouflage of the colossal disaster sustained by them at the hands of the Allies in North Africa.

Though Arakan was a minor campaign, there has naturally been considerable discussion as to the reasons for its failure. The question of lack of training of troops and speculation as to whether adequate use was made of river transport are two of the points which have attracted most attention. Before we examine the reasons, it is of some interest to indicate in brief the course of the actual campaign. This may be divided into six definite stages. The first stage was an advance made by us to the Butheda ng-Maungdaw line, which found the Japanese unprepared. The second was a further advance by us to the Donbaik-Rathedaung-Kyuktaw line, where Japanese resistance hardened. An unsuccessful attack on Japanese positions at Donbaik and Rathedaung marked the third stage. The fourth began with a Japanese counter-attack from the Kaladan Valley, which took our Rathedaung force in flank. Another counter-attack across the Mayu river, which took our Donbaik position in flank, was the fifth stage in the Arakan campaign. And the last was the fall of Buthedaung and the evacuation of Maungdaw, which were the results of a Japanese thrust along the Mayu hills and the cutting of the Buthedaung-Maungdaw road.

Fighting Down the River: Difficulty of Communications. It may be asked why the Japanese were allowed to dig in at Donbaik and Rathedaung and why their successive outflanking movements were allowed to develop and succeed. The answer is difficulty of communications. Fighting up he river is much easier than fighting down the river, because the side which holds the mouth can bring in as many craft as it can collect, but their opponents do not have this advantage. Further the side which holds the mouths of parallel rivers, as in Arakan, can concentrate superior forces on any one river. This was the reason for the Japanese stopping us at Donbaik and Rathedaung. We had enough troops to get to Foul Point opposite Akyab, but the difficulty was one of maintaining them there. While communications were being developed by our side, the Japanese had time to reinforce and dig in. We had limited forces on the Kaladan, but the Japanese could concentrate superior forces, clear the river, and then threaten our line of communications to Rathedaung.

Why did we not hold the Japanese threat when they also had to operate over a land line of communications, it may be asked. The answer is our line of communications was not strong enough to maintain troops at its head and enough troops to protect it throughout its length. That was why Rathedaung had to be evacuated. The same manœuvre was repeated on the Mayu Peninsula, and so we had to go back to the Maungdaw-Buthedaung line. But why did we evacuate Maungdaw also? The answer is the Japanese could have repeated the same manœuvre here also, for the line of communications to Maungdaw runs down west of the Mayu hills, east of which runs the Mayu river. The position was such that there was no need for the Japanese to attack Maungdaw directly. They had only to use their ability to dispose greater forces on the river line of communications up to the last of the hills and advance up. Then the same old problem would crop up again—the problem whether the Maungdaw line of communications could maintain sufficient troops to hold Maungdaw and to protect the line of communications throughout its length. It was because this could not be done that Maungdaw had to be evacuated.

It might have been possible for small parties to get to the Japanese positions, but it would not have been possible to maintain through the hills sufficient forces to close the enemy's line of communications from Akyab. It was the lack of communications that was responsible for a large number of troops being engaged in fighting continuously for a period of five months without any relief whatever and under conditions which did not admit of sleep during nights.

There is also the question of training which is very important. Units trained to fight in a desert cannot necessarily fight well in a jungle. The Japanese were specially trained in jungle fighting. A crack Japanese division contained veterans of five or six years' experience in jungle-fighting.

* * * * *

Benefits of Arakan: Successful British Expedition to Central Burma. On the whole, it may be said that though the Arakan campaign was a failure, it was not without its benefits. Firstly, Japanese were deprived of the use of Aykab during the fighting season on account of this campaign. Secondly, one of Japan's best divisions was severely mauled. Thirdly, our soldiers have learnt a lot about the Japanese and their methods of defence in jungle-fighting.

We referred to the Berlin radio statement about the alleged "growing strength of Japan in the East" at the beginning of this article. How can this be correct in the face of the recent daring and successful British expedition to Central Burma where, during the last three months, a British force comprising British, Burman, Gurka and Indian troops, has been successfully operating. This, however, is not the beginning of any general offensive. A full-scale offensive against the Japanese in Burma will surely come later on.

STALIN PRICKS THE BUBBLE

FIELD MARSHAL SMUTS addressing a party rally in Capetown on Tuesday night (June 1), referred to the dissolution of the Comintern and said, "M. Stalin's policy has been to wipe out international Communism in Russia itself. He consummated his victory by disbanding the Communist International and as far as Russia is concerned that form of Communism is dead." The great South African leader added, "I am sure that Russia will do nothing to interfere with the internal position in the other countries, and it is fallacious to say that an opportunity was presented for fostering Communism in South Africa because South Africa is in alliance with the Soviet. Communism is a minor movement in the Union and receives no support from Russia." This reflects the general opinion of all other leaders of the United Nations also. But so far as the Axis powers are concerned, they have been considerably upset by Stalin's pricking the bubble of Red bogey propaganda carried on sedulously by Dr. Goebbels' department.

First Axis Reaction

THE first Axis reaction was one of the irritation. Berlin said that the decree of the Presidium Committee of the Communist International disbanding the Comintern was not authentic, since M. Stalin did not sign it. In his broadcast talk in English on May 24, Lord Haw Haw said, "It is noteworthy that Stalin himself, although a member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, did not sign the decree," and added that if it was necessary at any future time to disavow the validity of the document, M. Stalin would do so. But to the discomfiture of the disciple of Goebbels, M. Stalin has taken a very early opportunity to emphasize, in the most categorical manner, the object of the dissolution of the Comintern.

IN a letter written in reply to a question by Mr. Harold King, *Reuter's* Correspondent in Moscow, the great Russian leader says, "The dissolution of the Communist International is proper and timely, because it facilitates the organization of the common onslaught of freedom-loving nations against the common enemy—Hitlerism." He then discusses its implications, and concludes by saying, "I feel that the dissolution of the Communist International is perfectly timely, because it is exactly now when the Fascist beast is exerting its last strength that it is necessary to organize the common onslaught of freedom-loving countries and finish off this beast and to deliver the peoples from Fascist oppression."

Strengthens Allied Front

THIS letter is a document of very great importance, as it has, firstly, the immediate effect of strengthening the united front of the Allies, and, secondly, the long-range effect of clearing the way to the organization of peace through "companionship of nations based upon equality." It completely knocks the bottom out of the suspicions and doubts raised by Berlin propagandists. It is significant that the announcement of dissolution so completely upset Berlin that one Nazi announcer, in his exitement, claimed that it was the direct result of German activities and that M. Stalin would not have been scared into renouncing the Communist International if the Fuherer had not raised a cloud of dust against Bolshevism But this blunder was discovered early, and was not subsequently repeated.

THEN a different kind of argument was taken up. It was stated that the decision was the result of President Roosevelt's suggestion made in the letter to M. Stalin sent through Mr. Joseph Davies. But in a news broadcast in German on May 25 Berlin claimed that the disbandment resolution was antedated by five days, "in order to camouflage the connection between the alleged disbandment of the Comintern and Roosevelt's letter handed over by Mr. Davies." In his talk in English next day, however, Lord Haw Haw said that the dissolution was intended to conceal the initiation of a new propaganda offensive against Britain and America and that it would deceive any one.

Stalin's 1924-slogan.

AXIS propaganda has been continuing to harp en this theory that the exit of the Comintern does not really mean an abandonment of Communist activity in various countries, but that it means an intensification of such activity on account of the freedom given to Communist organizations by the severance of relations with Moscow It is true that the Moscow decree does not make much difference in practice, but in quite a different sense. It may be recalled that in 1924 M. Stalin launched the slogan of "Socialism in a Single Country." He was of opinion that in view of the failure of the world revolution, the duty o the United States of Soviet Russia was to make itself a successful model for the proletariat of the world. Then there was a great controversy with Trotsky who persisted in believing and working for a "world-revolution." But he failed to carry with him the Communist parties of the world. M Stalin stood vindicated, and the Soviet Union engaged itself henceforwards in trying to build up a strong Socialis State in Russia, leaving the Communist parties in other contries to deal with their own problems in the way they thought fit..

A Logical Conclusion

THE dissolution of the Comintern is thus a logical conclusion of Russian policy during the last one or two decades. It contains an assurance to the peoples of occupied countries that, after the war, they will get a government of their own choosing. Communist parties will be part and parcel of the national body-politic of every country and will not receive any "orders from abroad," they will also share in shaping the post-war reconstructions of those countries.

IT may be said that the United Nations have scored two major successes of far-reaching importance. One is the Tunisian Victory, and the other is the Moscow announcement.

THE ECONOMIC SOLUTION IN A NUTSHELL

PERILS OF TOO MUCH MONEY!

The following is an extract from a recent speech by MR. C. H. MASTERMAN, C.I.E., I.C.S., *at Vizagapatam.*

A great many of you, in fact most of you, can assist enormously at this time by living economically and putting your savings into Defence Loans, Post Office Savings Certificates and the like. In contributing to the War Fund, Madras, has done extremely well, and Vizagapatam, among the districts, has always been one of the foremost. In providing recruits too, the Madras Presidency has done excellently, and Vizagapatam is prominent among the districts.

The other day, I sat as Chairman of a Post-war Reconstruction Conference, and we had occasion to study the recruitment figures of each district. I observed with great pleasure that Vizagapatam stood fourth, Malabar, North Arcot and Tinnevelly being in the first, second and third places. *But* in contributing to Defence Loans and other Government Saving Schemes, the Madras Presidency has lagged far behind many other provinces, and Vizagapatam is a very long way down the list. Yet, at the present time, *this*, I think, is the most important contribution which the ordinary person can make to the war effort.

DEFENCE LOANS—THREE REASONS

Why should you subscribe to Defence Loans? For three reasons. Firstly, the most important reason, you will be lending your money to Government to carry on the war. Secondly, the least important reason, you will be making a good investment for yourselves, and thirdly, because in putting money into Defence Loans, you will be helping a great deal to solve this difficult and important problem of inflation and rise in prices. The first two reasons require no explanation, but the last perhaps does.

Put in the simplest words possible, and avoiding the use of the economists' technical terms, the position in India is that there is a scarcity of certain commodities, and at the same time, a very large amount of money in circulation. These two factors together inevitably lead to a general rise in prices. The first factor—the scarcity of commodities—requires no proof. You all know that things are difficult to get. That is due entirely to war conditions. It is due partly to the fact that Japan is in occupation of places like Burma and the Dutch East Indies from which, before the war, we used to get such commodities as oil, rubber, rice and so on, and partly to the fact that shipping *to* this country cannot be spared, except to bring in essential war materials. Nothing very much can be done about it. It is an inevitable consequence of a worldwide war.

DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSPORT

Scarcity in particular places within the Province is a different matter. This is largely due to the difficulties of transport within the country. Everything possible is being done to organize better distribution within the Province, but you must remember that, in war time, transport both by rail and by motor transport *must* be very difficult. I am myself a member of the Regional Board of Transport, and I know that the difficulties are great. I can only assure you that everything possible is being done to ease the situation.

The second factor—that there is a large amount of money in circulation—does, I think, for some people at any rate, require some proof. Well, I can give you a few homely instances to show that this is so. Land Revenue collections have never been better. People want to pay their income-tax in advance while the going is good, because, at the present time, they have plenty of money with which to pay. The consumption of arrack and toddy has almost doubled. All of which instances clearly show that people of all classes have money to spend.

It is important, then, to divert as much as possible of that large amount of money in circulation by inducing people to *save*, instead of spending their money in non-essentials, or on a larger quantity of essentials than they really need. I feel sure that many people are still spending in war time much more than is necessary on entertainments, marriages, festivals, and the like. If you put all the money you can spare, over and above what you really require for the necessities of life, into Defence Loans, you will be doing a real service, not only by lending to Government money with which to carry on the war, but by diverting some of the surplus money in circulation into channels where it cannot be spent on non-essentials, and in the long run, you will be doing much to check the general rise in prices.

PROBLEM OF HIGH PRICES

This question of high prices is greatly exercising people's minds at present. So many pronouncements have been made about the question that people begin to say, "We do not know where we are." Well, the shortest and I think, the best answer, to those people is, "You are in the middle of a worldwide war, and in the middle of such a war you cannot expect everything to run like clock-work." You must expect some scarcity. You must expect difficulties of transporting things from producing centres to where they are needed for consumption, and you must expect that commodities will be dear. As I have already explained, the high price of commodities is due to two factors—a decrease in the amount of goods available for sale and an increase in the amount of money available with which to purchase things. Both are due primarily to war conditions. The scarcity of some goods is due, as I have explained, to the fact that some producing countries, such as Burma, are in enemy's hands, and to the fact that ships cannot be spared to bring things to this country; the increase in the amount of money in circulation is due largely to the amount of money which Government have had to pay out for war supplies and wages to those working on military works.

"SAVE BY RATIONING OURSELVES"

The question is what the ordinary person can do to remedy things. I am suggesting this evening that we can all help by living more economically, by refusing to hoard, and by putting what we thereby save into Defence Loans. In other words, I am suggesting that we ration ourselves and put what we save by rationing ourselves into War Loans.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have appealed to you before in Vizagapatam for other purposes, and I have not been disappointed. I feel sure that my appeal this evening will not be in vain. His Excellency the Governor has requested me to serve on the Madras Provincial Defence Loans Committee for the express purpose of appealing to the mofussil towns on my tours to contribute to Defence Loans. I should like to be able to tell him that Vizagapatam leads the way among mofussil towns. I know that this evening I am not reaching directly many merchants in Vizianagram and other places who are, many of them, making profits out of contracts and supplies; but I suggest to your War Committee that you begin a "Savings Drive" in this district, as has been begun in Madras City. At present, you could do nothing more useful to further the war effort and, at the same time, to reduce the general level of prices.

TRIBUTE TO INDIAN TROOPS: A CYPRUS GIFT TO MADRAS GOVERNOR'S WAR FUND

We give below an extract from a letter, dated 30th April 1943, received by the Madura Mills Company, Limited, Tuticorin, from their Cyprus Agents, Messrs. M. H. Bedelian & Co., Nicosia:—

"The fighting qualities of Indian soldiers in this war, their toughness, their skill and their devotion, have been praised several times by their Commanding Officers and recently by the Prime Minister himself. We, as civilians, can only admire and thank them for their courage and sacrifice, and as a small token of our appreciation we donate the sum of Twenty-five Pounds Stg. for their welfare and happiness."

The Madura Mills Company have, accordingly, sent a cheque to the Secretary, His Excellency the Governor's War Fund, Madras, for Rs. 335-1-3 being equivalent of £25 at ex. 1s./5-29/32 *d.* towards amenities to Indian Troops.

Suky
STALIN'S STATEMENT
RED BOGEY

INDIAN TROOPS IN THE AFRICAN CAMPAIGN

OUT of three and half years of conflict in the African war areas emerges a triumphant record of achievement by the Fourth Indian Division—the "Fighting Fourth." Probably never before in India's army history has one of her infantry divisions maintained such continuous action over so long and difficult a period, writes a correspondent in the *Times of India*.

The story of this division's part in the North African campaign is one of relentless tenacity and a refusal to accept defeat; of a fight against tremendous odds. It is a story in which an empire was destroyed and a continent freed.

OFFENSIVE

Almost exactly one year after the outbreak of war, Italy's Marshal Graziani invaded Egypt. But he was stopped at Sidi Barrani, about 50 miles inside the border, and that was the furthest he ever got, because at the beginning of December, when the enemy least expected it, Field Marshal (then General) Wavell suddenly launched his offensive. Indian and British troops made short work of the forts round Sidi Barrani. The Indian division thrilled the world by capturing 20,000 prisoners in three days, while the Australians took Sidi Barrani itself. And so the advance continued until the whole of Cyrenaica was in our hands.

Meanwhile the Fourth Division was transferred to East Africa where it joined the Fifth Division, to reinforce the small British and Sudanese detachments holding the border of the Sudan against vastly superior Italian forces. On January 19, 1941, the two divisions began a simultaneous advance into Eritrea. Five days later our forces cut off and destroyed five colonial battalions in Keru, while the main Italian forces were pushed back to the important road junctions of Agordat and Barentu, through increasingly difficult country. At both these places there was severe fighting; a shrewd turning movement won the first place and the second was won only after another display by Indian troops of sheer courage and determination.

RACE FOR KEREN

Then began a race for Keren where the Italians were withdrawing to their mountain stronghold. They got there only just in time and that meant bitter and prolonged fighting for our troops—the most severe the Indian Army had so far experienced in this war. But it was worth while, for the fall of Keren on March 27 sounded the deathknell of Italy's East African Empire.

Success then followed success. Berbera and the whole of British Somaliland were reoccupied without serious resistance, the Punjabis who had so heroically defended the colony in the previous year forming part of the landing party. An East African Force moved into Italian Somaliland, ships of the Royal Navy and the Royal Indian Navy made their way through the minefields of Massawa, and the colony fell.

Next followed the simultaneous advance into Abyssinia from south and north. The Duke of Aosta made a stand at the approaches to the mountain stronghold of Amba Alagi, but when he surrendered this national fortress, after some hard fighting, to the Indian, British and South African forces, the East African campaign was virtually at an end.

Indian troops could now be spared for other theatres where they were badly needed. The 3rd Motor Brigade had already been engaged in a heroic rearguard action at El Mechili, which enabled the main British forces to reach and hold Tobruk. For the first five months Indians formed part of the beleaguered garrison which continued to cramp the enemy's style.

October 1941, was a month of preparation. So far as Libya was concerned, we were back where we started. The enemy was strongly established along the escarpment which divides Egypt and Libya but the only Egyptian territory he held was a small outpost at Sollum. The 11th Brigade of the Fourth Division barred the enemy's approach along the coast and it was not until November 18 that our offensive was launched just in time, as we learnt later, for the Germans were preparing an assault on Tobruk with all they had on November 23.

In this offensive, Indian troops played a prominent part. While troops of the Fifth Division created a diversion from Giarabub towards the Jalo Oasis, the Fourth Division attacked the strongly fortified enemy positions in Libyan Omar. A brigade of the Fifth Division made a remarkable journey of 300 miles, capturing Jalo with 700 prisoners, and despite all enemy efforts on both divisional fronts, the Indians drove on until December 17 when patrols discovered the enemy in flight.

It was after Benghazi had fallen that the following message was received by General Auchinleck from General Ritchie: "The Fourth Indian Division have really done the most magnificent work. No praise can be high enough for their achievements."

But their task was not by any means ended, although the position looked hopeful at the time. The Nazis made their second comeback and got as far as Gazala. For a time our 7th Brigade at Benghazi was completely cut off. But the Indian troops proved themselves as steadfast in disaster as in success, and they managed by clever tactics to evade Rommel's ring steel and rejoin the rest of the Division.

ALAMEIN LINE

From Gazala Rommel came on again in May 1942, with all his armour. The 3rd Indian Motor Brigade made a gallant stand just north of Bir Hacheim and the gunners of the 2nd Indian Field Regiment put paid to more than 50 *panzers* before they were overrun. Further north our own armour took a still heavier knock, which compelled the Eighth Army to fall back further than ever before, back past the Egyptian Frontier to the Alamein line. This time Tobruk, too, fell, but not before the 11th Brigade (then under the Fifth Indian Division) had fought gallantly on the perimeter in a vain effort to stem the *panzer* push.

It was at this time that General Alexander took over command in the Middle East and on November 4 the Eighth Army attacked and broke through at El Alamein to start what eventually was the final rout of the Axis from Africa. Then came the magnificent entry into Tripoli; Mr. Winston Churchill's dramatic meeting there with General Montgomery, and the ceremonial march-past of Indian and Commonwealth troops on January 23, 1943.

Between January 1 and April 15 last Rommel and von Arnim had lost 66,000 men killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. In addition, 250 tanks were captured or destroyed. Other losses included 3,000 vehicles, 425 guns and over 1,000 planes.

MARETH VICTORY

Then followed the great Mareth victory on March 29 in which Indian troops were again to the fore. Gabes was entered on March 30, Sfax occupied on April 10 and Soussee two days later, with the Fourth Indian Division still in the vanguard of the attacks. The division finished up by entering Tunis and capturing von Arnim. Mr. Churchill wrote: "We have watched with admiration the splendid achievements in the Fourth Indian Division in the battle of Mareth and in the recent victory at Wadi Akarit. The high renown of India's soldiers and of the redoubtable Gurkha troops has been enhanced by the outstanding performances of the Indian Army in all the campaigns of the Middle East. . . . We take pride that India's fighting men should now share in the successes which have crowned the long uphill contests in which they have played so valiant a part."

THAT STRIP OF WATER!

Hitler looted Michael Angelo's "Moses" from the Louvre and carried it off to Berchtesgaden. When asked by his associates why he had stolen this particular treasure he replied:

"Oh, it's a great piece of art, you know."

But one of the Gestapo, spying on the boss, has reported another explanation. He saw the Fuehrer on his knees before the great Jew and he was saying:

"Dear Moses, tell us how to get across that strip of water!"

His Excellency the British Ambassador to Egypt and Lady Lampson gave a garden party in the beautiful grounds of the British Embassy, Cairo, on Easter Sunday (April 25) to over three hundred British, Indian, Australian, New Zealand, South African, American, Canadian and Fighting French repatriated prisoners of war. A surprise was the appearance of General Montgomery, who received a big welcome. With Lord and Lady Lampson, General Montgomery chatted with men of the Fourth and Fifth Indian Divisions and referred to the great part played in the present campaign by the Fourth Indian Division.

His Excellency the Ambassador and Lady Lampson each made a special broadcast for Indian troops.

Photo shows General Montgomery chatting with Major Aluwalia, M.C., who commanded the 17th Indian Field Light Ambulance before he was captured.

Indian troops played a major role in the battle for Enfidaville which was bitterly defended by strong German and Italian forces. Batteries of twenty-five pounders laid a heavy barrage on the enemy positions prior to the infantry attack.

Photo shows the twenty five pounders in action.

An American war correspondent gets first-hand information of the battle of Enfidaville from a Commanding Officer of an Indian battalion.

TIME TO INDIA BY SEA HALVED

By THE NAVAL CORRESPONDENT *of the "Daily Mail"*

WITH the last Axis soldier driven from Africa, Britain can once again use the Mediterranean as a great artery of her communications. Thinking only in terms of the Middle East, Iraq and Persia this is estimated to mean a saving of 2,000,000 tons of merchant shipping, while it is easy to see a saving of nearly 5,000,000 tons when all our sea routes have been reorganized on the basis of the full use of the Suez Canal.

That epic story of the "two Mediterraneans" is over for good. The eastern and western basins fade again into the background of navigators' charts and plans. No longer are they prime considerations of naval strategists and tacticians poring over secret maps of enemy coast-lines and possible channels to force through a convoy or a squadron of warships from one end to the other.

TWICE AS MUCH

Nor by any means does the victory of Tunisia end in the Mediterranean. The time to India by sea is halved, or put in more appropriate terms, we can now send by way of the Suez Canal and the Red Sea twice as much war material in exactly the same number of ships.

Little wonder then that the Germans have made such desperate efforts to drive us out of the Mediterranean. Do not be led astray for one second by their propaganda that the loss of Tunisia is of secondary importance to them. To the United Nations who depend on the seas of the world, it is of extreme and vital importance.

CANNOT COUNTERBALANCE

For every merchantman that entered this struggle think of the warships, manpower and shore organization that were permanently occupied in shepherding her every moment, and you have some idea of the fighting strength once tied up in the Mediterranean, but which is now released for other and more aggressive work.

Nor does this story end in the Mediterranean. As our shipping is increasingly able to use the direct route, much of the naval tonnage and personnel scattered round 9,000 miles of Africa's western and eastern shores is relieved from guarding the overwhelming proportion of our vital traffic round this vast detour. It too can turn to offensive again. If Hitler can now at the touch of a magic wand double the number of his U-boats and their crews he could not begin to counter-balance the disaster that our conquest of the Mediterranean means to him.

PAYING BACK THE DEBT

By WICKHAM STEED

MORE swiftly than the most optimistic forecasts suggested, the Allied campaign in Tunisia has ended in complete victory. The Axis forces have suffered a defeat comparable only to the disaster that befell them at Stalingrad. No less significant than the defeat itself are the means by which the Allied armies inflicted it at remarkably small cost to themselves.

Unity of command, full harmony of purpose and action unprecedented concentration and co-ordination of air power and gun power, armour and infantry attack, broke through formidable enemy position, swept him off his feet and drove him to surrender one of the strongest fortresses in the world. This Allied victory is a portent, both political and military. For the Axis it heralds, as Field Marshal Smuts of South Africa has said, the beginning of the end.

REACTIONS IN EUROPE

Throughout Europe the effects of this outstanding achievement are already apparent. In Russia enthusiasm for the allied Western democracies has replaced any misgivings upon their determination to launch an invasion of the European continent.

Every people from Greece to Norway, and from France to Poland, oppressed by Axis occupation, rejoices over the prospect of approaching liberation. Axis satellites from Finland to Rumania, including Italy, have lost faith in German victory. Morally, no less than militarily, the Axis has received a stunning blow.

General Franco, the Spanish Dictator, could hardly have chosen a more inopportune moment to resume the peace offensive which Count Jordana recently undertook without success. Both Mr. Cordell Hull for the United States and Mr. Anthony Eden for Britain have answered the Caudillo by repeating that the Allied terms are unconditional surrender and that the Allies are not interested in any attempt at mediation.

ALLIED STRATEGY

How the military situation will now develop is a secret of the co-ordinated Allied stategy which Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt are now reviewing. It is no secret, however, that the victory in Tunisia will set free a large amount of shipping tonnage for Allied operations by shortening the supply routes. Nor is it doubtful that further blows against the Axis will be struck without avoidable delay or that they will be powerful. It was the Allied speed that upset Axis calculations in Tunisia, speed combined with strategical and tactical superiority. The Allied Governments and Commanders are unlikely to forget this truth.

Nor are they likely to lose the advantage of unity. Every report from Tunisia attests to the complete fusion of the United States, British and French armies under General Eisenhower and General Alexander which overwhelmed and surprised the Axis. Never in the last Great War was a comparable degree of willing co-ordination attained. Politically and militarily, this identity of purpose and effort will influence both the future course of the war and peace.

CHOICE BEFORE ITALY

No such unity or identity exists in the Axis camp. Throughout the North African campaign German soldiers have treated the Italians contemptuously as inferior and subordinate associates.

After every successive defeat from El Alamein in October to Wadi Akarit in April, the Germans left the Italian troops in the lurch and appropriated Italian transport.

Now Italy herself is faced with the choice between progressive devastation in the service of Hitler and escape from the German clutches. Allied air raids upon Palermo, Messina, Naples and other Italian ports and centres of communication foreshadow the ordeal that Italy must undergo unless she repudiates Mussolini and Hitler alike.

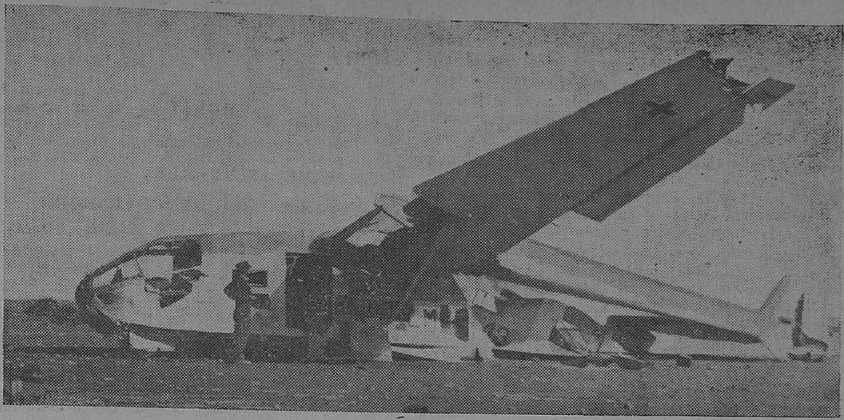
Germany's ordeal will be severer still. The Ruhr and the Rhineland are covered with the wreckage of German industrial plant. Even Goering's journal at Essen confesses that the limits of human endurance have been reached. But British and United States aircraft have not reached the limits of their power to avenge the immense wickedness which Germany has let loose upon the world.

The King of England has written that in Tunisia the debt of Dunkirk has been paid. The debts of Norway, Holland, Belgium, France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yogoslavia and Greece remain to be paid. They will be paid in full until Hitler, Nazism and the German war machine are eliminated for ever.

PLACED

INSTRUCTOR (somewhere in England): "That's six rounds you've fired without hitting the target once. What were you in civil life?"

RECRUIT: "A racing tipster, sir!"



EXTERIOR OF A GERMAN TROOP-CARRYING GLIDER DAMAGED BY ROYAL AIR FORCE BOMBING ON AN AERODROME IN THE WESTERN DESERT.—*Even allowing for the increased appearance of size created by the camera's perspective, this photo gives a fairly accurate idea of the size of these troop-carrying gliders.*

MISCALCULATIONS OF GERMAN HIGH COMMAND

By MAJOR-GENERAL SIR CHARLES GWYNN

SELDOM can a great fortress position such as the Axis held in North Tunisia have been crushed with such speed or with such devastating result and loss of prestige. The capture of von Arnim and the final collapse of all resistance occurred almost overnight.

Axis excuses are little more than an acknowledgment that their High Command had failed to appreciate the capacity of the Royal Navy and Allied air forces to interrupt the flow of reinforcements and an admission of a desperate gamble deliberately undertaken. The true facts, I think, are that the Axis command was confident that the position could offer prolonged resistance and was prepared to accept a degree of risk in order to retain its power of blocking the Mediterranean route. But it had disastrously miscalculated the extent of the risk.

COMPLETELY OUT-GENSALLED

What may we and what will the German people think of a High Command capable of such gross miscalculations? In the actual defence of the positions, the commander on the spot appeared in hardly more favourable light. He allowed himself to be misled by Alexander's manœuvre and was completely outgeneralled. When the decisive attack came, his best troops and the strongest body were facing the Eighth Army which did not attack. The moral ascendancy which the Eighth Army's achievements have established is worth noting. Von Arnim evidently looked on it as his greatest danger.

On the parts of the front which were attacked, his troops were exhausted and his reserves dispersed and depleted in counter-attacks delivered during the last week of April may have delayed Alexander's decisive attack by a few days but only at the sacrifice of power to resist the attack when it was finally delivered.

The Axis troops, until they had been exhausted by Alexander's preliminary attack and by demands made on them by their own commanders, fought with determination and courage and they cannot fairly be held responsible for the debacle. The fighting of the Allied troops was beyond all praise, but they could hardly have achieved such amazing success if they had not been superlatively commanded.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN SERVICES

Throughout the whole battle, Alexander was evidently admirably supported by the initiative of his subordinate commanders of all nationalities. It is quite obvious that British troops of the First Army have gained much by experience, and the strides made by the Americans since they first came in action are even more noticeable. The French too have had the opportunity and incentive to throw in their lot with the Allies wholeheartedly. Their magnificent achievement, even without full equipment, has proved conclusively that the spirit of France has survived and that the defenders of Bir Hakeim gave true indication of what might be expected when the opportunity came. Co-operation between services has been better than ever and in this respect the experience gained can be passed on to the forces of other theatres.

On the German side, the withdrawal of the Luftwaffe in the final phases and its poor showing in general will require some living down. The non-appearance of the Italian navy was less unexpected but one is left to wondering how far the possibility of evacuation was ever included in German plans.

SOLDIERS OF "SUPERIOR RACE" SURRENDER

By H. C. O'NEIL (*Strategicus*)

WE can see in the enemy defeat a fitting tribute to the brilliant plan of General Alexander.

It had in it the quality of supreme generalship—complete simplicity. It turned upon fostering a German conviction that the Eighth Army would give the *coup de grace* while transferring two armoured divisions and the Indian Division to the left of the First Army to launch the attack.

But this does not adequately explain the collapse of the resistance which has been so complete that never before has the German army suffered so swift and so wholesale a defeat. Every circumstance we can discover makes the defeat more abject.

It was in fact due to a complete breakdown in morale; and nothing can minimise that astounding collapse.

German generals in the last war provided us with the criteria by which we can judge the episode. Looking back on a much less abject defeat on August 8, 1918, Hindenburg said: "To be beaten in a battle in which we stood on the defensive was a very different matter from failure in attack."

VON ARNIM'S TACTICS

Now von Arnim was, of course, fighting on the defensive. He had, moreover a very strong position, his left flank being covered by the massive bastion of the Cape Bon

peninsula and even his weaker right protected by the crumpled outwork of hills which had for months held up the British advance. Behind his right was one of the most elaborately fortified positions in the world.

Admiral Muselier had described the defences of Bizerta in such terms that it seemed impossible that they could be breached except by prolonged bombardment.

Not only had the German Commander very strong defensive position, he had also a sound defensive plan. He intended to leave an adequate force in Bizerta and pivot the rest of his army on Zaghouan Massif in order to withdraw into the Cape Bon Peninsula.

The advantage of the defensive strength of his positions and the skill of his plan gave him just a few days! Ludendorff, referring to the 1918 episode, added this comment to that of Hindenburg: "I was told of their behaviour, which I frankly admit I should not have thought possible in the German army: whole bodies of our men had surrendered to single troops or isolated squadrons. . . ."

But what would he have said of the scenes witnessed during the last few days?

HITLER-GOEBBELS THEORY

It is a very dangerous thing to encourage an army to believe that they belong to a superior race, because the day may come when they encounter modest and courageous people, who anticipate all their boasted cunning and fight them until their only desire is peace and rest. Then all their trusted landmarks disappear and they collapse and revert to the needs of the animal. That happened in Tunisia. It has happened before, but never so completely.

The Hitler-Goebbels theory then is good only so long as the army is victorious. In defeat, it exaggerates the characteristics of the German people. The elder Moltke, one remembers, said that he was satisfied with the morale of the German army in victory, but would prefer not to discuss its behaviour in defeat. Its morale is brittle and tends to be as abject in defeat as it is flamboyant in victory.

DECLINE OF MORALE

There are special reasons for the decline of morale in the army at present. It is a profound mistake to imagine that the only effects of the tremendous and growing power of the Allied air offensive are the damage done to the German cities and sufferings of the people who live in them.

The most important effect is their influence upon German soldiers. These men have been launched all over Europe and in Africa! and on the whole they appear to have won an almost unbroken series of great victories. Yet they are daily receiving from their wives, sisters and sweethearts reports of their sufferings under Allied raids.

Letters have been found upon soldiers on the Russian front as well as in Africa; and the descriptions of the destruction and terror of these raids lose nothing in the telling. Under this bombardment, soldiers suffer more than they did in the last war when it was mainly of the effects of the blockade.

In Tunisia the Germans gave the battle a decisive character and in the end simply threw in the towel. The effect of that will penetrate the whole of the enemy army.

EMERGENCE OF OUTSTANDING ALLIED GENERALS

By L. S. B. SHAPIRO

SUCH names as Rommel, von Arnim, von Bock, von Mannstein and von Rundstedt have become household words in our communities and they have been endowed by our imaginations with powers and abilities they hardly possess. It is a curious circumstance, but it is perhaps true, that German generals were better known to the people of the Western democracies than our own field commanders.

The importance of discussing our military leaders lies in the remarkable manner in which the Western democracies have been developed outstanding generals during the last two years. We are fortunate, because in peacetime we pay little attention and give small encouragement to our promising soldiers. We go into war therefore with a definite inferiority complex about our field commanders.

NEW LEADERS

To-day, after three years of war, there is no longer a basis for our inferiority complex; out of our quickly developed armies have emerged military leaders in whom we can place the fullest faith and to whom we can entrust the lives of our finest youths.

At the outbreak of war, so far as the public was concerned, Britain had only one field commander with a reputation high enough to stand against the legendary Germans: he was *General Sir Archibald Wavell.* When Pearl Harbour brought the United States into the war, the Americans had only one general with capacity to hold the public imagination. He was, of course, *General Douglas MacArthur*, now Allied Commander in the South-West Pacific.

To-day, we can look upon the list of our field commanders with vast comfort. We have, for instance, the man who exploded the legend of Field Marshal Rommel and left it strewn all over the Western Desert: he is *General Sir Harold Alexander*, the fighting North Irishman who looks like Clarke Gable, organises with the genius of a Henry Ford and can hit like Dempsey.

It was Alexander who organized the last desperate stand before Dunkirk; he was the last general officer to leave the French shore, and he may well be the first Allied general to step once more upon the battlefield of Europe.

The story of Alexander's rise to greatness has been paralleled by the development of *General Montgomery* of the Eighth Army. He, too, is a product of the emergency of this war. Virtually unknown a year ago outside British military circles, Montgomery has become probably the most popular British general in the last 30 years. The cheers his name attracts in Britain are paralleled by the terror it invokes among the Germans and Italians he has defeated.

As a result of the unprecedented smoothness with which the vastly complicated Allied landing in North Africa was effected, America's *General Eisenhower* joins the gallery of great Allied commanders. He, too, is an emergency development. Two years ago he was just a Colonel in the War Department in Washington; to-day he is a full General in charge of the whole North African theatre.

CANADIAN HERO

Another Allied commander who has come to grip the imagination of the British public is Canada's *Lieut.-General MacNaughton.* He has not yet directed action against the enemy, but the manner in which he has built the Canadian Army into a mechanized force of immense striking power, has made him a prominent figure in all our military speculation.

There are many other fine soldiers who have come to earn the respect and confidence of our free people. All of them prove, I think, that our cause has been favoured by that same grand stroke of the fate which placed two such men of destiny as Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in posts of leadership at a moment of history when our civilization was most gravely threatened.

—Condensed from a recent B.B.C. talk.

NOT OURS

"Are battleships really doomed?" asks a reader. Not all battleships—just those flying the German, Italian and Japanese flags.

NORTH AFRICA: THREE LESSONS TO GERMANS

ATTEMPTS by Goebbels to hide from the German people the immensity of their army's disaster in Africa will fail, because the Germans are a military minded people. They understand the technique of land warfare, almost as naturally as we British grasp the elements of sea strategy.

They will learn the news. From other countries, radio, private messages and rumours and the Germans in Germany will soon know the precise truth.

Even rumour cannot exaggerate this total eclipse.

What then will Africa teach the Germans? The first lesson—the Nazi creed collapsed in the vast von Arnim expeditionary force. They were ordered to fight to the last. They surrendered while they still had an immense fighting potential.

BESTIAL TRADING ON FAMILY SENTIMENT

Moreover, they threw their arms down and hands up *en masse* after formal warnings that their relatives in Germany would be punished for such "shameless conduct."

This bestial trading on family sentiment is the root of Nazi domination. Hitler has just seized Giraud's daughter. It was by this dirty tactic that he first established himself among his own people. In occupied countries, it is his routine method of forcing labour among non-collaborators.

Yet in the African army, these threats to relatives were scorned and ignored. In this isolated Tunisian theatre, the conduct of the Wehrmacht challenges the Nazi creed.

The second lesson: The Germans will understand that we have acquired their blitz technique wihout forgetting our old battlecraft of penetration by infantry. The Germans well know the use of infantry.

SUCCESS IN ARTS OF WAR, NEW AND OLD

In this war, they have had no large-scale infantry success on their side. But they have seen our men succeed in both old and new arts of war. To the German —understanding war, since it is his main business in life—this is a shocking and nerve-shaking revelation.

Lesson number three: These "decadent democracies" are beating the Germans in generalship. Since its initial application of the panzer technique to give weight and speed to the striking force, German generalship has not advanced while Germans see Allied generalship constantly improving.

Nor need they think that we will not go on improving. For it is our way of life to be original and full of initiative. And we never doubt that our way of life contains within its instincts of its own preservation against Hitlerite robots.

THE CREED OF FRIGHT

Himmler, Gestapo Chief, is the only living German whom Hitler praised at Lutze's grave. Let Himmler go ahead, starving, torturing, murdering German relatives of the 160,000 German prisoners. Let the Nazi creed come to its full putrid head.

That is doubtless Hitler's instinctive way of putting fight into his men—putting fright into women. But if even he finds this purge too big to be feasible, he has no appeal left except the fear of the wrath to come in defeat.

—*Daily Express.*

NORTH AFRICAN MILESTONES

THE summer of 1942 was a summer of crisis for the Allied forces in the Middle East. Having driven the enemy to El Agheila during the winter of 1941-42, they had been pushed back in their turn to the eastern extremity of the Cyrenaican highlands. The scorching heat of May found them holding an untenable front at Gazala. Except for their own minefields and gun positions, there were no natural barriers to stop the onrush of the enemy through the open desert.

On may 27 the enemy struck. He by-passed the minefields, besieged the French garrison at Bir Hakeim, drove a lane through the minefields, and, in a whirlwind battle, inflicted heavy losses on Allied armour. The Allied had no choice but to withdraw. On June 11 the magnificently inspiring resistance of the French garrison of Bir Hakeim came to an end. A week later Tobruk isolated, fell before a massive air and infantry assault. The enemy pressed forward. On June 28 he occupied Mersa Matruh, on June 30 El Daba and on July 1 he was at El Alamein—only 65 miles from Alexandria.

A MONTH OF SUSPENSE

The hot-house trained, crack German Afrika Korps was nearer to Suez—its primary objective—than it had ever been. Mussolini—that "sawdust Caesar"—hurried across the Mediterranean hoping to be in time to enter Alexandria at the head of the Axis forces. August 1942 was a month of extreme suspense for the Allies. Marshal Rommel was reinforcing his mauled divisions for a new attack. In an Order of the Day issued to his men on September 1, he declared: "To-day the Army, reinforced by new divisions, will launch a new attack in order finally to destroy the enemy." That attack was launched. It was met—and held. Within a week his men were back at their starting point.

On October 23, 1942, the loudest cannonade ever heard in the desert heralded the Eighth Army's offensive. After 12 days and nights of "ceaseless attacks", the Axis forces were in "full retreat". It was to be a 1,700 mile retreat, one of the longest in the history of warfare. "The battle just won," said Montgomery to his men, "is only the beginning of our task".

EL ALAMEIN

El Alamein was won on November 4. On November 8 the greatest armada ever assembled (more than 500 transports and 350 escorting warships) arrived at pre-arranged stations off the shores of French North Africa and Anglo-American forces occupied in quick succession Rabat, Algiers, Oran, Bougie, Casablanca and Bone. At the other end of the Mediterranean the Eighth Army's advance, after the initial stage, was progressing with lightning speed. On November 13, only nine days after El Alamein, Tobruk was taken and avenged. The Eighth Army had covered this distance in less than half the time it took the enemy to come in the opposite direction five months earlier. By November 29, the enemy was once more at El Agheila.

FALL OF ITLAY'S LAST EMPIRE CITADEL

Less than two months later (January 23), Tripoli, the heart and the last citadel of the Italian Empire, was entered and the Eighth Army crossed the border into Tunisia. In exactly three months the enemy had been chased 1,400 miles. He now entrenched himself behind the Mareth defences—the "Maginot Line" of French Africa.

After two months of careful preparation, Montgomery broke through the Mareth defences (March 29). Then followed the victory of Wadi Akarit and the occupation of Sfax (April 10) and Sousse (April 12). The Eighth Army's arrival in Sousse was the signal for intense and sustained Allied pressure to be exerted on all sectors of a 100-mile front, with the Eighth Army on the right wing, the First Army and the French Corps in the centre and the American Corps on the left wing. Hill after hill was taken in fierce, bloody, hand-to-hand fighting until finally the Allied armour roared down into the plains and into Tunis and the great naval base of Bizerta, both of which fell on May 7.

"HONOURABLE TO SURRENDER"

On May 12, an officiall Allied communiqué announced the end of the campaign, the last Axis units on African soil having laid down their arms. The following day an official communiqué from Hitler's Headquarters said: "The Commander-in-Chief of the German and Italian formations in Africa has today found it honourable to surrender."

In the Western Desert—"Can't you whistle anything else but 'Sand in My Shoes'?"

FROM CAIRO TO CAPE BON

By MORLEY RICHARDS

THE first man in the Afrika Korps to get out of Africa was Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. This was the Rommel who boasted in Berlin in August last year, "We've come into Egypt to stay." Hitler was present when this dauntless General addressed his acquiescent audience. "Cairo is before me," he said, "my mission is to reach Suez and my Fuherer's commands are my law."

The Allied cause had reason to falter. At El Alamein, Rommel was fewer than 90 miles from Cairo. The Eighth Army had retreated a thousand miles, its armour lost, a third of its total force taken prisoner, or dead.

Scarcely 10 months have passed. And, to the credit of British arms be it remembered, Field Marshall Erwin Rommel did not wait that long. He left Africa on March 19, fleeing before the enexorable force of an army that has beaten him and beaten him to near annihilation.

LONGEST PURSUIT

To do that British and Dominion solidiers have carried out an advance of nearly 2,500 miles. It is the longest pursuit of any beaten foe in military history. It exceeds the retreat of Xenophon; it far surpasses the retreat of Napoleon from Russia. Time is nobody's friend when those who wait at home pray for the fortunes of their men battling in the sands of a distant land. But time is an avenger.

Think back to 1940, when Italy, thinking the coast was clear, entered the war. Then Field Marshal (as he is now) Wavell had barely 20,000 men under his command. Marshall Graziani commanded 300,000 troops. They crossed the frontier into Egypt and entrenched at Sidi Barrani. Cautious Graziani thought that that was far enough for the time.

WAVELL'S CAMPAIGN

Back in Cairo, Wavell with his odd brigade or so of tanks decided to bluff the Italian spies who then honey-combed the city. He sent tanks out on a circular tour—it is an old stage-trick—to enter and re-enter their headquarters with their drivers prominently displaying themselves above the turrets of the tanks.

Sometimes they wore a tank beret. Sometimes they wore Service caps. They would affect false moustaches, even a generous beard. The spies counted them, and decided that Wavell had overwhelming tank strength. His total number of armoured fighting vehicles was not more than 150, most of them obsolescent models. You know the story—he lived on Italian supplies which he captured as he went along, and gained Benghazi. His little army was worn out, exhausted. They tried to hold Benghazi with a handful of men and guns.

EPIC OF TOBRUK

Enter Rommel. He brought with him his Afrika Korps, trained under hot-house conditions in Germany, so as exactly to reproduce the tropics of Africa. Every man was a picked man. Rommel, the good Nazi, was the man who had broken through with his tanks at Sedan. Rommel was Hitler's chosen General.

He drove the Eighth Army back to the Egyptian frontier. There came then the epic of Tobruk. Nine months' investment in which the enemy lost far more than the defenders. The Navy, though it cost them ships and many lives, kept the garrison an aggressive, wicked thorn in Rommel's side.

He built his road below Tobruk to bypass it and render it ineffective. The garrison stole out at night and destroyed it. He was never able to marshal his strength to attack fair Egypt.

SEESAW BATTLE

The battle became a seesaw. Both adversaries fought for position. It came to a day in November 1941, when the British attacked. By then Rommel had built up an armoured force of more han 800 tanks, with his 88-mm guns as a surprise weapon and his elite grenadiers to overcome anything the Eighth Army could do.

General Cunningham, then in command, had good weapons too. Numerically as good as the enemy's, but he was unable to bring concentration to bear, which would have carried us through an annihilated Afrika Korps. Tobruk was relieved fleetingly, and then Rommel swept on again. For days the bloody battle raged. Rommel then made the greatest mistake in what has now to be regarded as a highly unsuccessful career.

He sent his force into Egypt behind a major British force which was committed in battle. In the judgment of one of our corps commanders given to me afterwards, if he had gone on then he would have cut us off completely and destroyed us. He faltered, turned back, and the battle ended indecisively. It came to 1942, with Rommel back beyond Benghazi, but still unbeaten. Both sides built up their strength again. New weapons were brought to this strangest of all battlefields, where there are comparatively few civilians and great waterless spaces in which armies can fight.

"DO-OR-DIE" COMBAT

Once again the British Eighth Army had to fall fack. Rommel counter-attacked in strength, but not with any definite purpose. General Auchinleck, our Commander-in-Chief in Cairo, was building up his strength and after a lull which lasted for three months he was ready again. Once more British tanks and Empire infantry moved across the sands to assail the pride of the Third Reich.

It was May, and Rommel was halting on the line from El Gazala to Bir Hakeim. Again the days passed in do-or-die combat. It went in the end against the British. Tobruk, with its 25,000 ill-prepared troops, fell captive to the enemy. Rommel swept on towards Egypt at last and the British crossed the frontier with scarcely 50 tanks intact.

THE RETREAT

Auchinleck had lost the battle that was to gain him Tripoli. He had not lost the retreat which was to retrieve our fortunes. He made no mistake. He kept together his force—what was left of it—intact and went straight back to El Alamein, where Wavell, back in 1939, had calculated that there on the 40-mile front with the impassable salt marsh depression as the other flank from the sea he could defend Cairo and Alexandria.

Rommel drove his men so hard that when they reached the British line they were so exhausted that some of them went to sleep as they stood up. He had to give us some days' respite. He attacked again. By then General Alexander, who had succeeded Auchinleck's command, had strength and his soldiers had the "we-are-not-beaten-yet" spirit to throw him back. Wtih Alexander had come Montgomery.

EXIT ROMMEL

Over in Washington, Churchill and Roosevelt had made great decisions. The Sherman tank, said Roosevelt, should be released from supply to the American army and sent to the Eighth Army. The rest of the story you know. Bombastic Rommel begging supplies from Berlin that never reached him had to stand his ground. The real truth that when he was being publicised in the Wilhelmstrasse, he was in fact asking the German High Command for weapons that could achieve him the victory about which he so glibly spoke.

Churchill and Roosevelt saw to it that the Eighth Army had the weapons. Already they had the fighting spirit of "desert rats"—bank clerks, labourers, once unemployed, ordinary men of England—whose courage with the weapons that the Allies had given them has finally swept Rommel into as resounding a defeat as ever an army commander has suffered. Rommel was the first man out of Africa. —*The Daily Express.*

O.K.

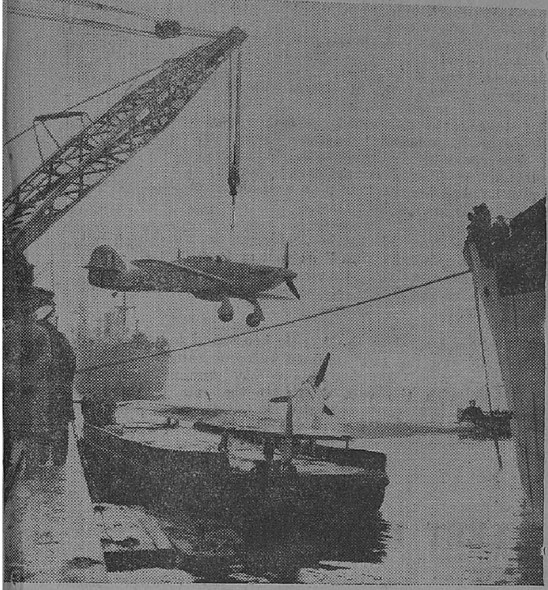
"I've got the man you wanted for the officers' mess, sir," said the sergeant.

"Has he had any experience?" asked the officer.

"I think so, sir," replied the sergeant. "He says he was a platelayer before he joined the army."

LUFTWAFFE WHIPPED OVER TUNISIA

By WING COMMANDER L.V. FRASER



M.S.F.U. in full means the Merchant Service Fighter Units one of the R.A.F.'s most daring fighter bands The pilots with a small maintenance staff, journey with defensively armed merchant ships in convoy. Their aircraft is catapulted off when going into action. against enemy aeroplanes approaching the convoy. The operation is controlled by an officer of the Royal Navy known as the Fighter Defence Officer. At the end of the combat, or if running short of fuel, the M.S.F.U. pilot tries to land on friendly soil. If he is at sea, he takes to his dinghy and hopes to be picked up. Photo shows M.S.F.U. Hurricanes going aboard the parent vessel.

ONE thousand six hundred and fifty-five Axis planes, 62 ships, 18,00,000 lb. of bombs—Working almost within sound of aircraft in battle, statisticians have struck this remarkable balance sheet for the months from November 1942 to May 1943, from thousands of combat reports of Allied pilots of the North-West African air forces: 1,655 enemy aircraft destroyed in the air for the loss of 631 Allied aircraft (1,655 includes those destroyed by anti-aircraft batteries).

18,526,724 lb. of bombs dropped on docks, shipping, landing grounds, supply bases, armoured vehicles and transport and front line positions of the enemy. (This figure excludes attacks carried out by the Desert Air Force.)

Sixty-two ships have been sunk by air attack. The supply ships sunk include two tankers, two freighters, four barges, twelve motor ferries, eight merchant vessels and other vessels. The naval vessels destroyed include four destroyers, one cruiser, four E-boats, five landing craft and one escort vessel. Many others, left burning or damaged, but were not seen to sink.

THREE ARTERIES

The North-West African air force is fed by three main arteries—strategic, tactical and coastal air forces. It was created and built to its present gigantic strength despite great difficulties in the way of weather, supply and terrain. Yet despite all the difficulties it has grown.

In the last stages, the Luftwaffe was swept from the skies. Tanks and infantry broke through. Tunis and Bizerta fell. Axis remnants were still harried and the African campaign sped to its abrupt and triumphant close.

INFANTRYMEN PROVE THEIR METTLE

THE hero of the Tunisian campaign in the First Army as in the Eighth Army is the infantryman, writes the "Daily Express" Australian correspondent with the First Army. Your tankman lightly faces death or horrible mutilation by burning or explosion. Your bomber or fighter pilot flirts with death day and night. But even so, it seems to me that the man who has the hardest, toughest, most perilous—and, of course, the most thankless—job in the war remains here, as in Russia now and as in the last war, the little man with the gun.

I have watched the British infantryman in action on two sectors of the African front against the finest desert and mountain fighting machine which German military genius could place in the field. They fought in combination with planes, guns and tanks, but to them belongs the lion's share of the credit for victory. Their difficulties have been tremendous; their success cannot be measured in terms of occupied area.

In one instance, British infantry advanced five miles along a ten-mile front across the Medjerda valley. With bayonet and tommy-gun they drove a determined foe out of fortified earthworks, heavily-mined ridges and precipitous strong points. On flat country this would be equivalent to an advance of at least 50 miles along a front of the same width.

On the stony slopes of "Longstop" Hill, that bare shell-packed ridge which hampered the British advance from Medjez-el-Bab, the infantry dug in for two nights under murderous mortar and machinegun fire before they drove the enemy from the highest pinnacle.

No man can challenge the vicious stutter of machine-guns emplaced in rocky heights without high courage and fighting spirit but when he charges those guns across ground packed with live dynamite and presses on unwaveringly as mines explode on either side, he exhibits heroism and fortitude that seem at times to be more than human.

Seldom does this stubborn infantry fighting—which has been necessary to clear the flanking hills of guns so that tanks could lumber across the plains—cease at night. At midnight or when cold fogs descend on these central Tunisian hills before dawn the infantryman, exhausted and battle-frayed in his hard-won trenches, can expect the enemy to counter-attack. He dozes for an hour or two in his dusty sweat, his gun beside him, his tin hat on his head—because the night raiders know his exact position. Most of the Tommies seem to agree that the worst moment in an infantryman's life is to awake startled, half-sleepy still and unutterably weary, to face the blaze of tommy-gun fire and the black silhouettes of an advancing enemy determined to wrest back the day's lost territory.

"You get sort of worked-up, hot-like, fighting in the day," one infantryman put it, "but when you wake up you're tired, cold and surprised. You feel like you're starting all over again. Cripes! There's been times when I'd have given everything I'd in this ruddy world for another hour's peaceful sleep."

According to experts, the German earthworks in this campaign have been models of military art in digging in. When concrete pill-boxes were joined with deep trenches behind an ugly wadi at Mareth, stout-hearted Germans could withstand the heaviest barrage or bombing raids, provided they kept their heads down and their spirit up. Concentrated shellfire is deafening and terrifying, but it is astonishing how safely the garrisons can endure it if they are in the shelter of well-prepared positions.

Those unsung heroes of the Durham Light Infantry—"White Gurkhas" the Maoris call them—who climbed the Mareth wadi on one another's shoulders in moonlight under a hail of fire proved that the infantry-man's bayonet is still needed to dislodge an enemy numbed but unshaken by artillery barrage.

Other infantry epics which cannot yet be told in detail are the midnight assault on the "Peak" before the battle of Akarit and the incredible scaling of the Takrouna citadel by the Eighth Army Maoris. These British infantrymen are heroes of the Tunisian campaign.

REVERSES AND PARODIES OF HISTORY

LESS than three years ago, we were enduring the anguish, at moments almost despair, of Dunkirk. If history does not repeat itself it sometimes reverses or parodies itself.

From that grievous and heroic scene, we rescued close upon 335,000 men, including a very large number of our French Allies. Only a relatively small proportion of the British Army was captured in Flanders.

How different has been the performance of the Axis in deceptively similar circumstances. None of their troops have been evacuated and over 170,000 of them have been captured after sudden and surprising collapse, despite their strong mountain positions and supplies still plentiful, though ill distributed. The surrender at Stalingrad was the first great stroke at the myth of German invincibility. North Africa has been its grave. The German defeat there is on an even vaster scale than at Stalingrad and we are entitled to satisfaction on our preponderant share in it.

A glance back is refreshing in several other respects. Less than three years ago Mussolini by a cowardly and ignoble stroke stabbed prostrate France in the back. It seemed to him a cheap and safe way of establishing claim to some scavenging among the ruins of the Third Republic. A felon's blow has cost him the whole of the Italian Empire. Never has justice been more complete.

And by a crowning irony his egoism paled into insignificance beside that of the Germans who consistently left their allies in the lurch.

Let us look back again a little more nearly. Only last autumn, Rommel stood at the door of Egypt. "We stand there to act," he said vauntingly.

Now the scene will shortly shift to Europe. We make no suggestion as to the area to be smitten and first liberated. One point, however, stands out as a sequel to the great victory; the Mediterranean is henceforth wide open to our merchant marine with the vast gain in time and economy in tonnage. The larger question: "Where do we go from here?" was, no doubt, settled, so far as it then could be at Casablanca. What will follow is now being discussed at Washington whither Mr. Churchill has again betaken himself "to plan well ahead of the armies" as he put it in his broadcast.

It is clear from his further reference to the liberation of "long tormented China" as well as from the galaxy of British and American commanders in attendance that operations in the Far East as well as in Europe are on the agenda.

We will not emulate the frantic boast and foolish words of Rommel and the now subdued vaingloriousness of German propaganda. But now it is we who stand at the door of Europe with the vast difference that the peoples of the Hun-racked continent are longing to let us in.

—*Sunday Times.*

AXIS MEDITERRANEAN FLEET DWINDLES

By A. J. McWHINNIE

THE sensational defeat of the Axis in North Africa could not have been achieved without sea power—sea power which landed troops from the greatest armada in history, sea power which kept those troops reinforced and supplied from 11,000,000 tons of shipping in six months.

That fundamental fact may influence the Italian Admirals and their German advisers to overhaul their futile naval strategy in the Mediterranean. Some new indication that the Italian Admirals realize that naval warfare means more than "showing the flag" to their own people may yet come.

But the British sea power welded with air power did more than protect the passing through to the North African theatre of constant war supplies. Aircraft and naval forces on the surface and British submarines have between them sunk and damaged more than 100 Axis ships in the Mediterranean during the six months of the North African campaign.

AWKWARD GERMAN NAVAL QUESTIONS

Apprehensive and furtive questioning about why the decisions were not made to frustrate this sea power have forced the Axis spokesmen to some of the frankest confessions of the war. They have described their difficulties. But they have not been so glib at explaining their decisions.

Admiral Luetzow in German went before the microphone to answer the one question which has been sweeping the Axis and the occupied countries.

Why, the people have asked themselves, do the U-boats not concentrate their activities in the confined waters of the Mediterranean where we know that Allied ships are steaming every day? Would it not be easier to locate and attack them in the narrow waters than in the vast waters of the North Atlantic?

Admiral Luetzow was frank.

He explained the difficulties of U-boats in shallow water where they could be more easily located with improved detection methods and then depth-charged.

HALF THE REAL ANSWER

That was only half of the real answer. The German Admiral has merely stored up more anxiety in the hearts of his people whose reasoning must make them see that British submarines have been fighting successfully in those same shallow and dangerous waters for two years.

Up to now, the Allied shipping for the armies in the Middle East had been forced to travel a long journey round the Cape—12,000 miles—as the Mediterranean dangers were too great. The ships on that run could make only two trips yearly. It took three months from England to Alexandria. Now each ship should be able to do the journey well under three weeks. Instead of two trips yearly, they may find eight trips possible at long last. With only a quarter of the steaming time to undertake, every ship on this run should now be able to do four times as much work. That means more tonnage available for the thrust at the Axis coastline; more tonnage available over and above the 160 new ships being built by the Allies monthly.

EFFECT OF NON-STOP BLITZ

I estimate that Axis shipping in the Mediterranean is now down to below 2,000,000 tons. Italy may have 1,000,000 tons left; there is 150,000 tons of German shipping which was trapped in the Mediterranean when the war began, unable to escape because of the British sea power at either end and in addition about 850,000 tons of Vichy shipping seized when Hitler marched on the south of France.

With the non-stop sea, air and underwater blitz, such as the Allies are staging now, that 2,000,000 tons will not last long. Less the shipping available to the Axis the greater is the Allied chance of striking at inadequately supplied and fortified spots.

WAS Mr. CHURCHILL TOLD?

"It's really disgraceful," said the elderly lady, glancing up from her newspaper, "permitting all this gambling in the R A.F."

"What on earth do you mean, Aunt?" inquired her nephew.

"Why these 'sweeps' the R.A.F. are having every day," replied the Aunt. "No wonder so many owe so much to so few."

OPERATION ON "THE UNDER BELLY"?

WITH Tunis and Bizerta in Allied hands, great events may take place on Europe's "under-belly"—or, equally well, they may not. It will depend entirely on the strategic plans of the United Nations' military chiefs. It is probable that, at any rate at the outset, there will be more than one landing on the Continent. Whether it will be on the northern or the southern coastline is a question for the answer to which we must wait.

Some of the main questions that must be borne in mind when planning to invade the Continent and when choosing any particular area for an attack are: (1) complete air supremacy; (2) complete sea supremacy; (3) a vast fleet of transports and supply ships; (4) good ports, with modern dock facilities, in the area to be attacked; (5) as short a sea voyage as possible, in order to conserve shipping; (6) plenty of airfields in the area to be attacked from which, after their capture from the enemy, aircraft could continue to give full and close support to the attack; (7) sufficient "depth" to make deployment of a large force feasible; (8) secure flanks, if possible; (9) the area to be attacked should itself be strategically important.

These are some, but by no means all, of the questions which must be considered. They should, however, be sufficient to show that much thought and still more preparation must be given to such an immense, difficult and daring operation.

MOST PROMISING AREA

Strategically Italy, in general, is the obvious area to attack. If Italy crumbled the Axis would be weakened, not so much economically but militarily. Many Allied troops would be released for action elsewhere and the encircling grip around Nazi Germany would be much shortened. The Mediterranean would be almost entirely free from severe Axis aerial attacks upon our shipping: only Crete would still lie on the flank—and if Italy were occupied operations on the Balkans could be put in hand. Corsica and Sardinia would be cut off and their position would be hopeless. The most promising area to attack in Italy is clearly Sicily and the "heel." This attack could be greatly helped by a large-scale raid (or even a second invasion) in the Genoa or Naples areas with the object of cutting the supply railways of the enemy in Sicily and, at the same time, providing our attacking force with good ports.

The enemy's power to resist would depend upon his ability to reinforce from the north—and, even in normal times, the rail journey would be of some considerable duration. If this railway system could be cut—it is particularly vulnerable in the Bologna "bottleneck"—the position of the Axis forces further south would be serious.

—Adapted from an article by Major Hamish Wilson.

A MILLSTONE ROUND GERMANY'S NECK

A few days have passed since the Axis collapse in Tunisia. Allied strategy is now focussed on Italy itself, or rather its Sicilian and Sardinian outposts.

Now the whole weight of Allied air forces based in Africa and Malta is being thrown against them and the mainland air and sea ports which serve them. Day by day, with almost monotonous regularity, blasting of aerodromes, barracks, harbours and power stations by Flying Fortresses, Wellingtons, Mitchells and Marauders goes on.

Communications between the two islands and the mainland must have been rendered most precarious; Reggio di Calabria and Messina, two terminals of the train ferry which links Sicily with the toe of Italy have been repeatedly hammered. Palermo, Cagliari, Catania and a dozen or more smaller ports in the two islands have been so much knocked about that their quays must be almost unusable apart from the risk which shipping on the high seas runs from British submarines as well as aircraft.

ITALY'S HELPLESSNESS

There can hardly be a landing ground in Sicily and Sardinia which has not been raked again and again. The Axis is desperately endeavouring to strengthen its defence. Fresh German fighter units and some of the monster Messerschmitt transport machines, which were vainly used in trying to save the situation in Tunisia have made their appearance. Much of this reinforcement is being smashed as it arrives. More Axis aircraft have been destroyed on the ground than in the air during the past few days; the total of Axis air losses runs well into three figures against a few dozens for the Allies.

The ineffectiveness of the defence which Italy has been able to offer in these attacks is characteristic of the helplessness in which she now finds herself. Her leading men make no bones about it. During the discussion of service budgets in the Senate a few days ago the First Under Secretary of State for the Navy, Admiral Riccardi, and then his colleague of the Air, General Fougier, openly confessed the weakness and the inadequacy of their respective arms.

PRECARIOUS LAND COMMUNICATIONS

Admiral Riccardi referred particularly to the difficulty of the task which the navy had had to assume in providing for communications by sea with the Italian forces in the Balkans owing to "insufficiency and precariousness" of land communication. This is a grave and significant admission. Some 20 divisions of the Italian army are required to assist in holding down the insurgent populations of Yugoslavia and Greece. This is a larger force than remains for the defence of Italy.

Could a country, threatened with invasion, find itself in a more deplorable plight? No wonder there has been a fresh combout of manhood and that the Prince of Piedmont has appealed to the population to "fill in the gaps" in the fighting forces. The gaps are wide indeed.

In other respects, the situation is equally desperate. Local shortages of food supplies are frequent and food prices have been soaring, although the Government organs declare that stocks in the country are sufficient. Several cases have lately been reported of sit-down strikes in industrial towns in Northern Italy where workers have demanded their wages in food since the money they were receiving was not enough to buy meals. This testifies to the serious breakdown in organization due partly, no doubt, to the confusion which has been produced in railway and sea communications by Allied air raids.

STATE WITHIN A STATE

On top of all this is the Fascist Party, that State within a State, created by Mussolini for the reform of Italy whose proud boast was that it had saved Italy from chaos, is shown to be rotten to the core. Its own newspaper organs have confessed to devastating criticism which the man-in-the-street poured out on the bungling cowardice and corruption of its jacks-in-office.

Now at the eleventh hour, Mussolini has ordered a super purge for the Party. His lieutenant, Scorza, is endeavouring to cure the rot by staffing its offices with men whose title to distinction is that they fought in the last World War against Italy's present allies. The bankruptcy of its reputation is proved by the way in which its leaders have begun to use the throne as shield for the Party. Twice in the last few days, prominent Fascist spokesmen have appealed to the Italians to "rally round the Royal House of Savoy and the Duce." Thus the Italian Royal Family, for 20 years slighted and thrust aside by Fascist upstarts, is once more serving as their tool.

Italy's plight places her Axis partner in a dilemma. If she sends troops to assist the defence of Italian coasts, she will have to draw on her strategic reserve before a land attack on the fortress of Europe has even begun. Moreover, she will be placing them in a position from which it may be difficult to extricate them when the time comes. Everything goes to show that Italy's internal communications are already much disorganized. Allied bombing will disorganize them much more and German divisions might find themselves almost as completely bottled up in the Italian Peninsula as they were in Tunisia.

ALLIED AIR SUPERIORITY

So far, Germany appears to be limiting her reinforcements to aircraft and anti-aircraft units. So far the German air force has been powerless to check the weight and efficacy of Allied attacks. In their air squadrons posted along the North African coast and at Malta, the Allies dispose of an overwhelming concentration of air power, the importance of which was justly emphasised by Air Marshal Tedder the other day.

If Germans wish to gather anything like an equal concentration, they will be compelled to call in "the mass of manoeuvre," which they are believed to have been husbanding for an emergency. Reinforcements on any less ample scale are likely to be frittered away in vain. But if that central pool is once engaged, they will have nothing to use against an Allied landing elsewhere.

This is the quandary in which Germany is placed by the weakness of Italy. If she uses her full strength to go to Italy's assistance, she weakens her position elsewhere and plays into the hands of the Allies. If she abandons her to her fate, the shores of Italy may offer the Allies excellent jumping-off places for further penetration of Europe.

Recently the two Axis partners have been celebrating their fourth anniversary of the signature of their pact of friendship and alliance, a pact of steel as their propagandists have dubbed it. While drawing up their sycophantic telegrams of mutual congratulations either Party may well have pondered on the folly which induced it to take to the other for an ally.

—*The Times.*

WAR DIARY

BRITAIN AND GERMANY

27TH MAY.—One German trawler was left sinking off the Dutch coast after an engagement with British light coastal forces. Four enemy trawlers were intercepted near Terschelling.

28TH MAY.—The Royal Air Force made a very heavy attack on Essen, the home of the Krupps. [Essen had been raided 55 times before.] Mines were laid in enemy waters. Two formations of Mosquitos bombed the Schott Glass Works and Carl Zeiss Instrument Works at Jena. Two enemy fighters were destroyed during sweeps over Northern France and Belgium.

29TH MAY.—The *News Chronicle's* Naval Correspondent wrote: The greatest naval operation in history is imminent. It will be the landing and maintenance of an Allied army on the Continent of Europe . . . Never before has the Navy been in a stronger position to do a task assigned to it . . . An immediate attack on Europe from the Mediterranean area is technically possible.

Six R-boats were destroyed and three more damaged off Cherbourg Peninsula by the Fleet Air Arm.

American planes pounded U-boat bases in France—La Pallice, St. Nazaire and Rennes.

30TH MAY.—German aircraft dropped boms in the districts of a south-west coast town. The Royal Air Force destroyed seven German fighters.

Aircraft of the Bomber Command in very great strength attacked Wupperthal, a great industrial centre in Germany.

31ST MAY.—About 15 enemy aircraft dropped bombs at a place on the south-west coast of England, three of which were shot down. Bombs were dropped in an East Anglian coastal district by about 12 enemy planes.

1ST JUNE.—Twelve enemy bombers visited a south-east coast town in Britain. Four of them were destroyed and two were hit by anti-aircraft fire.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. C. Attlee, gave to the House of Commons the following figures: The total British Empire casualties during the first three years of the war, 514,993; killed, 92,089; missing, 226,719; wounded, 88,294; prisoners-of-war, 107,891.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND ATLANTIC

27TH MAY.—An official statement on the result of the Washington talks between President Roosevelt and Mr. Chruchill stated: "The recent conference of combined staffs in Washington has ended in complete agreement on future operations in all theatres of war."

Mr. Stimson, Secretary for War, said that the Army would not interfere in politics when invasion forces moved into Europe.

30TH MAY.—Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana said: America should proceed primarily with the offensive against Japan and secondarily with an Allied invasion of Europe.

Mr. James Forrestal, United States Under Secretary of the Navy, disclosed that destroyer escorts carrying new and secret weapons to fight submarines would become next year the largest single class of warships in the United States Navy.

1ST JUNE.—Mr. Wendell Wilkie said in the course of Front Federation in a broadcast said: "I have reliable reports that Japan is planning to strike at the West Coast of the United States between June and October, 1943."

Mr. Wendell Wilkie said in the course of a speech: The post-war world faces a period of demoralization that will be critical for all nations.

The structure of the United Nations permanent organization to free the word from what was disclosed in the final declaration of the Food Conference. The declaration contained seven points.

Reports of three isolated Japanese attacks on the American West Coast were disclosed. The dates of the attacks were not revealed.

2ND JUNE.—United States merchant shipyards set up a new record when they delivered 175 vessels aggregating 1,782,000 tons during the month of May.

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INDIA, BURMA AND CEYLON

27TH MAY.—It was revealed that British aircraft strafted over 100 sailing boats in one enemy convoy.

28TH MAY.—The Royal Air Force attacked a Japanese-occupied village on Akyab island. A bridge and enemy-positions south of Buthidaung were machine-gunned.

29TH MAY.—The Royal Air Force attacked Heho airfield in Central Burma. Bombs were dropped on the Mandalay marshalling yards. Japanese troop positions in Kalemyo area were machine-gunned.

30TH MAY.—Fifteen Japanese bombers attacked Chittagong airfield. The Royal Air Force engaged the enemy, destroying one enemy bomber and three fighters and damaging others. Locomotives and rolling stock south of Thazi were damaged. Japanese aircraft were machine-gunned in Meiktila airfield.

31ST MAY.—Sir Nazimuddin, Chief Minister of Bengal, said that there was no apprehension of an invasion of Bengal and Assam.

The Royal Air Force attacked Kalemyo. Japanese troop positions near Buthidaung were machine-gunned.

1ST JUNE.—It was disclosed that in the past ten days a number of localised encounters took place in the Tiddim area of the Chin hills. The Royal Air Force bombed two enemy positions between Kalemyo and Fort White.

Six enemy aircraft were destroyed in the raid on Chittagong airfield on May 29.

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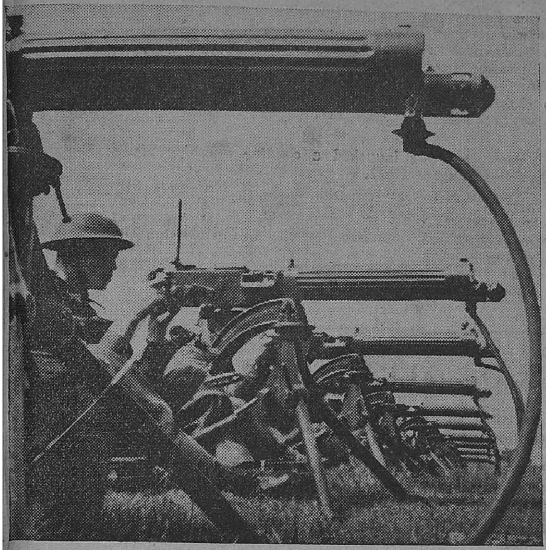
ITALY, AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

27TH MAY.—Three important airfields in Sicily were attacked by Allied aircraft. The Royal Air Force bombed enemy shipping off Cape Male in Southern Greece.

28TH MAY.—Royal Air Force aircraft attacked two more Axis shipping vessels on the south-east coast of Greece. One small ship was sunk and one schooner was left sinking. Allied planes attacked Decimomannu and shot down 13 enemy aircraft. Pantellaria was again attacked.

The Greek submarine *Papanicolis* sunk a small German supply ship off Crete.



MACHINE GUN BATTALION IN TRAINING.—In the South-east Command, machine gunners are being trained to use their formidable weapon with deadly efficiency. Photo shows an angle shot of a line of Vickers machine guns.

It was revealed that 15 German divisions and 5 Italian divisions were stationed in Greece and the Bulgarian occupied Thrace and Macedonia. It was also reported that guns from the Maginot line were set up on the Adriatic coast.

General Catronx arrived at Algiers.

29TH MAY.—Flying Fortresses attacked Leghorn in Italy. Damage was done to oil refinaries, docks ship-building yards and railroad yards. Enemy airfields in Sardinia and Sicily, the Castelvtiano airfield and Pantelleria were also attacked. 19 enemy aircraft were destroyed. The aerodrome at Foggia was raided.

Mr. Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary, warned Sgr. Mussolini that the bombing offensive would go on "until the utter defeat of the Nazi and Fascist regimes and all they stand for."

The Morocco radio stated that the Duce had decided to continue resistance "to the end" in Sicily and Sardinia. A report from Stockholm stated that Hitler, expecting a successful invasion of Italy evacuated wounded Germans from Italian hospitals to Austria and to the Reich.

30TH MAY.—General de Gaulle arrived in Algiers. He was welcomed by General Giraud and General Catroux. General Giraud in the course of a statement said: "Agreement has been reached between the French National Committee in London and the French High Command in Algiers."

In the course of a broadcast speech, Field Marshal Smuts warned the Axis that the Allies were coming and gave a message of hope to Axis-occupied Europe.

According to American estimates, detailed Axis losses in Tunisia were 30,000 killed, 26,400 wounded and 266,660 prisoners. The total Allied casualties in Tunisia were 70,000 compared with Axis losses of 323,000.

31ST MAY.—The Axis Radio reported that an invasion of Italy was "imminent" which was awaited with "extreme tension." The *New York Times* forecast that the next month will see the beginning of an Allied invasion of Europe.

The Algiers radio stated that Generals Giraud and de Gaulle have agreed to send a common representative to Washington.

The *German News Agency* (quoting a Vichy dispatch) stated that the French Fleet at Alexandria had "yielded to Anglo-American pressure."

Naples was attacked by formations of Allied planes which dropped numerous bombs. Sardinia, Foggia, Bari, Potenza and Pantelleria were also attacked.

2ND JUNE.—Reuter's special correspondent reported that a deadlock had been reached in the political discussions between General Giraud and General de Gaulle.

M. Peyrouton resigned the Governor-Generalship of Algeria.

Allied naval forces bombarded Pantelleria. Targets in Sardinia were also attacked.

...n press reports stated: "Allied invasion ships are massing in great numbers in every port in the ...ranean."

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RUSSIA AND FINLAND

27TH MAY.—As a result of Russian attacks, German troops evacuated a strip of land in Kuban. A group of German Scouts who crossed the northern Donetz was wiped out.

28TH MAY.—Waves of Russian infantry attacked German positions in the Kuban. There was fierce hand-to-hand fighting. The Soviet air force sank a troop-ship in the Black Sea. German airfields were bombed.

29TH MAY.—The Russians repelled a number of German counter-attacks in the Kuban. Considerable losses were inflicted on the enemy. It was revealed that the Germans lost 194 planes in the Kuban during the last three days.

Premier Stalin, in the course of a statement, said that the dissolution of the Communist International was proper and timely because it facilitated the organization of the common onslaught of all freedom-loving nations against the common enemy, Hitlerism.

30TH MAY.—The Germans brought up reinforcements to the Lisischansk sector where they were strafed by Soviet aircraft.

31ST MAY.—Soviet aircraft attacked the railway junction of Gomel and the railway station of Karachev. Trains and artillery depots were bombed.

2ND JUNE.—A new battle flared up in the Kuban bridgehead.

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SHIPPING

29TH MAY.—The British submarine *Regent* was lost.

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VICHY AND OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

27TH MAY.—Axis troops started a general offensive against General Mihailoritch's positions in Montenagro and Herzegovina.

29TH MAY.—According to despatches received by Polish quarters in London, the Jews of Warsaw Ghetto killed or wounded 1,000 Germans in a "second battle of Warsaw" lasting over three weeks. Blocks of buildings occupied by Jews were blown up and men, women and children were murdered *en masse*, but the Jews fought back fiercely, burning factories and German stores of war materials.

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THE FAR EAST

27TH MAY.—Mr. H. M. Forde, the Australian Army Minister, disclosed after a tour of Darwin area that hundreds of Japanese planes and 250,000 Japanese troops were massed in the island perimeter from Timar to Rabaul, north of New Guinea.

Mr. Fumio Goto, former Japanese Home Minister, who had been appointed Minister of State without portfolio, was reported to have said that the Japanese people were facing an unprecedentedly grave situation.

The Chinese launched a vigorous offensive along the north bank of the Yangtse in the direction of Ichang and Tangyang.

Mr. Kilsoo K. Haan, Washington representative of the Korean National Front Federation, revealed a Japanese plan to offer China separate peace not later than September next.

28TH MAY.—Allied aircraft gave Lae in New Guinea its heaviest raid yet with 28 tons of bombs and 12,000 rounds of ammunition. There were heavy explosions and numerous fires. Two enemy planes were destroyed.

Chinese troops cut the vital highway between Ichang (a great Japanese base) and Hankow.

American troops launched an attack on the Japanese in their third main position on the Attu Island.

29TH MAY.—Fourteen Japanese planes raided Millingimbi in Northern Australia, "causing minor damage and no casualties." Spitfires intercepted and shot down three bombers, damaging others.

American troops captured Fishook Ridge on Attu Island.

30TH MAY.—A Japanese convoy was attacked off Hansa Bay between Wewak and Madang. Rambang was raided by Allied aircraft.

There was fierce fighting all along the entire Western Hupeh front.

A United States communiqué stated:

Japanese press on Attu island have been annihilated.

The Tokyo radio admitted: "The Japanese garrison at Attu Island have been completely wiped out."

General Chiang Kai-shek's forces recaptured the key mountains pass of Yuyangkwan in a Yangtse river battle.

Chinese forces virtually surrounded five Japanese divisions near Ichang.

1ST JUNE.—Mr. A. S. Drakeford, Australian Air Minister, said that since Japan entered the war, Allied forces had destroyed 1,100 Japanese aircraft, damaged 480 and probably destroyed 392. Japanese shipping losses over the same period totalled 446 vessels, aggregating 2,224,600 tons.

Chinese forces launched a counter offensive along the entire Yangtse front.

2ND JUNE.—It was disclosed that 1,500 Japs were killed in Attu island.

General Tojo, Japanese Prime Minister, said: "In view of the seriousness of the present situation, it is imperative that everything not directly concerned with the war effort should be dropped."

INORGANIC MANURES OR FERTILISERS

These are chemical fertilisers which increase the fertility of the soil. They may be classified into nitrogenous fertilisers, phosphatic fertilisers and potassic fertilisers.

I. **Nitrogenous fertilisers** contain nitrogen which is mainly responsible for the growth of stem and leaves. Nitrogen can be supplied to the soil in the form of organic manures or by growing Leg minous crops. In the inorganic form, nitrogen is most easily absorbed by plants in the form of nitrates. The most common nitrogenous manures are sulphate of ammonia, nitrate of soda, and calcium cynamide.

(a) *Sulphate of Ammonia* is one of the most concentrated nitrogenous manures. It is a by-product in the manufacture of coke from coal. It is a greyish-white powder containing 20–21 per cent nitrogen in the form of ammonia. This nitrogen is not soluble and immediately available to plants, but has to be acted on chemically or by bacterial action in the soil, before plants can absorb it. For the garden it may be applied at the rate of 1–1½ oz. per square yard, dissolved in 2 gallons of water.

(b) *Nitrate of Soda* contains 15 per cent nitrogen in the soluble and immediately available nitrate form. For the garden it may be applied at the rate of ½–1 oz. per square yard, dissolved in about 2 gallons of water.

(c) *Calcium cyanamide* or Nitrolim is a fine black powder containing about 20 per cent nitrogen. The nitrogen in this fertiliser is also not immediately available and hence has to be converted to the nitrate form in the soil.

(d) *Ammonium nitrate* contains about 38 per cent of nitrogen and is probably the quickest acting of the nitrogenous fertilisers. But care should be taken in its storage, since it is liable to explode when stored in large quantities.

II. **Phosphatic fertilisers** contain phosphorus which stimulates and promotes the production of flowers and fruits.

(a) *Superphosphate* is a fine yellowish white powder, which is manufactured in several grades, varying according to the phosphate content (18-40 per cent of phosphoric acid).

(b) *Basic slag* is a by-product formed in the manufacture of steel. It is a fine dark-grey powder containing from 14-20 per cent of phosphoric acid. As a phosphatic fertiliser, it is not so effective as superphosphate.

III. **Potassic fertilisers** encourage the formation of starch and sugar. Plants take most of their potash in the early stages of growth, and hence should be applied before sowing or planting, and not as a top-dressing.

(a) *Sulphate of potash.*—This is very rarely used alone, but is generally applied along with nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilisers. It supplies potash in an immediately available form and is specially valuable for root-crops, fruits, etc.

(b) *Muriate of potash* is the commercial name given to potassium chloride. Owing to its chloride content, it should not be used for tobacco, potatoes, fruits, etc.

RULES OF MANURING.

1. Never put raw manure of any kind in direct contact with the roots. Always mix it well with the soil.
2. It is better to add little manure at short intervals, than large quantities all together.
3. Do not apply easily soluble manures just before heavy rains, because they will be washed away.
4. Other manures should be added during the rains.
5. For leafy growth add nitrogenous manures; for flowers and fruits increase phosphatic and potassic fertilisers.

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